

York City. Ed was larger than life. He was a great mayor of the city of New York, a fantastic Congressman before that, and a personal friend of mine and so many others. It's generally thought that Ed was the one who brought New York City back from the bad days—starting the good days. He was the quintessential mayor of New York, walking up and down the streets when he was mayor, asking people, “How am I doing?”

I just want to say this body had the good fortune to have had Ed Koch as one of its Members, and New York City had the good fortune to have him as mayor for three terms, and I had the good fortune to have him as my friend. In later years, he and I would meet periodically and go out for lunch at one of the restaurants downtown in mid-Manhattan. Ed would always pick the restaurant and be as feisty as ever. He was a very proud, proud New Yorker, and we are very proud of Congressman and Mayor Ed Koch. I will miss him dearly, as will all of New York and America. May he rest in peace.

CONGRESSIONAL PRAYER CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HUDSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to come to the floor tonight to discuss our Nation's rich spiritual heritage and the foundation it laid for the religious freedoms we still enjoy today. I'm hosting this Special Order hour as founder and co-chairman of the Congressional Prayer Caucus, a bipartisan group with more than 90 Members of the House of Representatives dedicated to protecting religious freedom in America and preserving our Nation's rich spiritual heritage. I co-chair this caucus with my good friend, Mr. MIKE MCINTYRE, a Democrat Member from North Carolina. We founded the caucus in 2005 to formally acknowledge the important role that faith plays in American life and to recognize our Nation's religious heritage. We're working to guard these legacies for future generations.

Members of the Congressional Prayer Caucus gather each week in the United States Capitol, just a few feet from here, to pray for our Nation. We leave political labels at the door and we join in prayer for one another and our country. We all know how unusual it is in the current political climate for Mem-

bers to unite across the aisle and work together. Yet throughout the more than 200-year history of our Nation, prayer has played a vital role in strengthening the fabric of our society.

Mr. Speaker, our prayers build upon the legacy that was established by early legislators. In fact, the first act of America's first Congress in 1774 was to ask a minister to open with prayer and lead Congress in the reading of four chapters of the Bible. As our fledgling Nation grew and encountered overwhelming challenges, time and time again we saw our Nation's leaders turn to God in prayer.

We live in a challenging time. Wherever I go, I encounter people who want to know if the future of America is optimistic or pessimistic. When I review the insurmountable challenges our Nation overcame to get to this point—the Civil War, World War II, the Great Depression, and so many more—I believe our future is optimistic. As long as there are men and women in our government and throughout our Nation who continue to turn to God for help, we'll always have hope.

In addition to joining in prayer each week, members of the Prayer Caucus also work together to preserve the presence of religion, faith, and morality in the marketplace of ideas. We're seeing increased efforts to remove references to God and faith from the public square. Activists seek to remove “God” from our national motto and Pledge of Allegiance. They seek to prevent city and county councils from praying and recognizing our Nation's spiritual heritage. And they seek to silence people who wish to live out their faith.

□ 1920

Members of the Prayer Caucus have countered these efforts, successfully ensuring that our history remains intact for future generations.

In the 112th Congress, I introduced a resolution reaffirming our national motto “In God We Trust” and encouraging its public display in public buildings. The measure passed overwhelmingly by a vote of 396–9. Some ask why we needed to reaffirm our national motto; yet if left unstated, the motto could be changed in a de facto manner.

On November 2010, before a worldwide audience in a much publicized speech focusing on the United States' relationship with the Muslim world, President Obama incorrectly proclaimed that our national motto was “E Pluribus Unum.” Despite a bipartisan letter from 42 Members of Congress, the President didn't correct his inaccurate statement. Now, thanks to the House passage of the In God We Trust resolution, children across America know that if God can be displayed on the walls of their classroom, they cannot be prevented from talking about him at school.

Members of the Prayer Caucus also worked to correct inaccuracies and omissions in the Capitol Visitor Cen-

ter. In 2008, the over-half-billion-dollar Capitol Visitor Center opened for the purpose of educating over 15,000 Capitol visitors daily on the legislative process, as well as the history and development of the architecture and art of the U.S. Capitol.

When Members toured the facility, however, CVC historians had censored the building of any references to our Judeo-Christian history. They had replaced the inscription of “In God We Trust” inscribed right behind you on the Speaker's rostrum with stars and a replica of the House Chamber and had cropped an actual picture of the Chamber so you could not see the words “In God We Trust.”

Additionally, a plaque was placed in the CVC falsely educating visitors that the national motto was *E Pluribus Unum*. They had not included the Pledge of Allegiance in the CVC because it referenced God. Only after Members of Congress intervened publicly and legislatively were these omissions and inaccuracies corrected.

I am proud to partner with my good friend, Mr. MIKE MCINTYRE, in leading this extraordinary group of Members in the Congressional Prayer Caucus, and I'm so pleased to be joined this evening by my colleagues who are working to protect religious freedom in America and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield to my colleague and my good friend from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE).

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his work on the Prayer Caucus. I would also acknowledge my good friend, MIKE MCINTYRE, for his work. This idea of religious freedom and liberty is indeed a bipartisan issue.

Our Founding Fathers came here from countries that had monarchs—kings—kings that could tell a person who they were to marry, what job they could have, what level of education they might attain. They could tell you what church you must be a member of. It was those state-ordained religions that many came to this country to get away from. They came here with an idea of a government that could only declare what your freedoms were, not limit those freedoms. It was that freedom of religion that caused many of the colonies to be organized differently, by different faiths—and some by no faith at all. It was in that backdrop that the Constitution was written which caused our Founding Fathers great pause.

The initial Constitution was written and could not be ratified. It could not be ratified by enough States until more freedoms were added, more freedoms that began with the First Amendment to the Constitution, the amendment that declared that we would have religious freedoms, that the government could make no laws concerning those freedoms.

Our Founding Fathers well understood the value of free and open expression of religious faith, one that was

free from the tentacles of government, one that was free for each person to choose, to exercise or to not exercise. Our Founding Fathers were not hesitant to declare their reliance on divine guidance.

Shortly after our Revolution—that revolution of ideas that started this grand experiment of self-governance—it was amazing that France decided they would try the same thing. But they were oh so uncertain about this divine guidance, this relationship with a higher power; and so they wanted something more tangible.

Their revolution became about reason. The problem with reason was that it was a human-ordained institution. We ourselves, we as people would not acknowledge that we were to comply with a higher power. That reliance on reason among men resulted in the chaos that became the French Revolution. It never found the success that the American Revolution had. I believe that much of that failure—and much of our success—was the difference in reliance, that difference of internal commitment to values and rules outside oneself.

Our Founding Fathers well understood that we, in order to have a Republic, must be a moral Nation. They declared that a Republic or democracy—whichever you would call it—can't impose through tremendous tyrannical restraints. It depends on us having a voluntary compliance with laws.

They feared a Federal Government that was too strong. The Constitution repeatedly limits the power of the Federal Government because they knew what strong centralized governments would do. They had to escape from Europe to get away from those exact things.

Today, we find a central government that is willing to compromise our freedom of religion and the freedom of expression of religion. Whether a person has a religious belief or not, it should cause you concern that this government is willing to take away the conscience protections. To make people buy products that offend their basic core beliefs should be alarming to any single member of this country, any single citizen. To find a government that will declare doctors have to perform acts that offend their very conscience is something that should give us all pause. But, instead, we see a Federal Government charging more heartily into the fray, even to diminishing and dismissing the belief in a higher power.

I think that that's the reason that the Congressional Prayer Caucus is so necessary and so needed at this time, because a Nation that forgets the real values is at risk of much greater catastrophe than what we've seen thus far, much greater catastrophe than an economy sagging brings, the loss of jobs brings. Because right now, we in America are struggling to find out what's in our heart.

We see many who are declaring that people are essentially good. The prob-

lem is not the person; the problem is in the guns, for example. I would say that the greater problem in America is not guns. The problem in America is the heart of America. Until we acknowledge and begin to reflect on that, until we begin to teach the new generations the importance of our heart in aligning with the heart of God, I think this Nation is going to go through more turmoil, more questions.

Our recommendation is that this Congress would stay away from limiting religious freedoms. I would request that every single citizen of this country contemplate those limitations that are currently being considered, those attempts to silence those in the faith community. A secular government is far different from a secular society, and yet that appears to be the discussion that we're having.

So, again, I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia for his leadership in this issue. I would like to thank all of the members of the Congressional Prayer Caucus. But I would especially like to thank the members and the citizens of this country for the unflagging belief that there is something more important than the human ideas. There's something more powerful, more stable, and more permanent than our current viewpoints on policies. Those are the laws of God that are inherent and knowledgeable to each one of us.

Again, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this issue.

□ 1930

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for his great work on religious freedom and religious liberty issues, and thank you for sharing that tonight.

Mr. Speaker, as individuals watch Congress across the country, one of the big criticisms they always talk about is all of the partisanship that hits here, and they just don't get to see the Congressional Prayer Caucus. If they did, they would see what they are going to see on this floor tonight, and that is my co-chairman, who is also one of my dearest friends in here tonight, and that is MIKE MCINTYRE. He is a Democrat from North Carolina; I'm a Republican from Virginia. But I can tell you that I have just the utmost respect for him, and I think he does for me.

It is my honor to now yield the floor to him.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you Congressman FORBES, Randy, for your friendship and your leadership, undying, uncompromising leadership to help the Congressional Prayer Caucus be the great spiritual force and practical legislative force that it is in its witness and its work.

And I'm thrilled to join my colleague, Congressman FORBES, and my other colleagues from both sides of the aisle who meet regularly for the Congressional Prayer Caucus, and particularly this week, as we get ready for the

National Prayer Breakfast coming up this Thursday.

Many Americans don't realize that this is a tradition that has gone on now for many years. In fact, this will be the 61st National Prayer Breakfast coming up this Thursday morning. I hope folks back home will tune in.

This has happened every single year since President Eisenhower, by every single President; and we are excited that the President and First Lady will be with us again, as they have been the last four years, and that this will be a time to see about 3,000 people from around the world gather together from about 140 nations to come and ask God's blessings and wisdom as we begin this new Congress in this new year.

But let me say in even a broader context, as Congressmen Forbes and Pearce have indicated, the Congressional Prayer Caucus is to carry on that, that in addition to supporting the National Prayer Breakfast this Thursday is to carry it on throughout the year and to affirm our commitment to maintaining and strengthening our great country's religious freedom.

Through the more than 200-year history of our Nation, we know that faith, prayer, and trust in God have played a vital role in strengthening the fabric of our society. We are incredibly blessed to live in a country that was founded on the bedrock of faith and allowing our citizens to worship freely and without fear of persecution, which is guaranteed by our Constitution.

Our Founding Fathers knew the importance of faith to the success of our infant democracy and affirmed it in the Declaration of Independence, declaring that our unalienable rights that we love to talk about as Americans, our rights of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are endowed to us by our Creator.

Indeed, faith was so integral to our new government that on Tuesday, September 6, 1774, the very first act of the first Continental Congress was to pause and join together in prayer. So this tradition doesn't just go back 61 years as we celebrate with the National Prayer Breakfast this week; it goes back to the very beginning of the first Continental Congress.

It's from these historic underpinnings that our Nation has grown and thrived, and we stand here today on the shoulders of those Americans who stood up and boldly fought for our rights to practice our faith freely. And we must never grow complacent, as Congressman FORBES pointed out, in some of the specific areas that we've had some issues recently. It's our duty to defend and protect the rights of all Americans, especially in a place like the U.S. Capitol, where we ought to be able to gladly recognize what our Nation's religious heritage has been.

Today we face many serious challenges as a Nation, and it's never been more important that we join together to ask God for guidance in making the right decisions. And that's why, during

the first vote each week, we gather right across the hall here during that first vote, if it's on Monday night or Tuesday night or sometimes even the middle of the week on Wednesday, but when we gather during that first vote to step across the hall, leave party labels at the door and ask God, like Solomon did in the Old Testament, for wisdom for that week for those decisions that we make.

We hear so much about partisanship. And having gone through an election recently that partisanship was in its full glory, I think it's reassuring to the citizens of this country to know that there are those of us who do want to reach across the aisle and who realize that faith and prayer transcends the partisan divide that we too often hear about here in Washington.

We pray together each week because we recognize, as our Founders did, that the true source of power is not found in the Halls of Congress or in the Oval Office of the West Wing or in the Chambers of the Supreme Court, but on our knees before the throne of grace before Almighty God. And it's with that bold truth in mind that we gather this week with thousands of people of faith during the National Prayer Breakfast. And it's in this spirit that Members of this body gather every week just across the hall in room 219 to reaffirm our trust in God and recognize the profound reconciling power of prayer and to ask God for His grace and His guidance.

I hope for those of you who are here in this Chamber and those who may be listening back home that you will join us, particularly this week, as we pray for God's blessing upon our Nation, for His will to be done throughout the world, for His peace to dwell in all of us, His children, as we gather for the National Prayer Breakfast. But I also hope you'll go to a Web site beyond this week, the Congressional Prayer Caucus Web site, and say, Yes, Mike, yes, Randy, yes, we do want you, men and women up there, to make the right decisions, you better believe it, because our country is that important, our future is that important, and we do want to make sure that we go forth as one Nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.

With that, I will also submit a copy of a prayer from Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence and, as we know, our third President, and pray that God's blessings will be upon this great Nation, not only this week during the National Prayer Breakfast, but with the work of the Congressional Prayer Caucus and those of you who will join us back home, individually, through your families, your churches, your places of worship, your fellowship groups or prayer groups, that you too will join us in making sure that we are building a wall of prayer around our Nation's Capitol, just as Nehemiah built the wall in the Old Testament.

Almighty God, Who has given us this good land for our heritage; we humbly

beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will. Bless our land with honorable ministry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people, the multitude brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endow with Thy spirit of wisdom those whom in Thy name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that through obedience to Thy law, we may show forth Thy praise among the nations of the earth. In time of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in Thee to fail; all of which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I pray God's blessings upon our Nation, and I yield back to our great leader and co-chairman of the Congressional Prayer Caucus, Congressman FORBES.

Mr. FORBES. Thank you so much for your leadership and your courage and your friendship, and we appreciate your words tonight and we'll treasure them.

Mr. Speaker, one of the true leaders in the House of Representatives is a lady from North Carolina. It's often said, when VIRGINIA FOXX speaks, everybody listens, and we're delighted tonight to have her here and to listen to her speak.

With that, I would like to yield the floor to the gentlelady from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia for that nice introduction, but especially thank him for leading this Special Order tonight and for being such a leader with our Congressional Prayer Caucus. He has given great illustrations of the ways the Congressional Prayer Caucus has taken action.

Mr. PEARCE, the gentleman from New Mexico, has given us an excellent history lesson, and our colleague, Mr. MCINTYRE from North Carolina, has helped to round out with information about the National Prayer Breakfast, and one of the reasons why we're focusing on the topic of the Prayer Caucus this week. I think they've given great context.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that we realize that God, the author of freedom, has given us a free land, and we praise Him for it. That freedom is the basis of everything else that we do in this country. This week, many people of faith will gather in Washington, D.C., to pray to Almighty God for wisdom and guidance and, above all, for obedient hearts to carry out His will.

The size and scope of the challenges before us would overcome a faithless people, so we acknowledge our desperate need for continued blessing and direction. We ask God to make us thankful, because ours is a country

founded upon religious freedom and deference to our Creator and not to government. We enjoy a societal understanding that dissent is not disloyalty. The United States upholds the God-given rights of its citizens to believe as they are called and to live their faith in accordance with their convictions. That individuals may set their own course so boldly is why creative excellence and individual property are capstones of citizenship.

We ask God for hearts vigilant to observe the numerous blessings He has given. And we ask for mercy not to stray from being good stewards of His gifts, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, to always protect liberties of conscience, to seek justice, love mercy, and follow humbly after God.

Only by His grace do we, who serve in this Congress, have any hope of being able to humble ourselves in service to others.

□ 1940

Only by His grace can we be safeguarded from trite competition and self-exaltation. Only by His grace can we do what my constituent Rob Lee encouraged and go outside our pride to "pray for our leaders, regardless of their political ideologies."

Our God is a loving God, and He is our defense. We ask Him often to keep a hedge of protection around our men and women deployed throughout the world for freedom's sake. We know it is the example of our Savior Jesus Christ, who lived the words "greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend," that inspires the brave generosity of so many of our warriors.

Our Lord is faithful to be near the brokenhearted when evil and sorrow have temporary triumphs in this world. We pray that His justice will be swift, and His righteousness our great relief.

To have even the slightest chance of living up to our oath and doing right by the people we serve, we need the help of Almighty God. This week, as ever, we reflect on that reliance and declare our thanks once again that we continue to be beneficiaries of His most awesome grace.

Mr. FORBES. I would like to thank Congresswoman FOXX for those remarks and for her leadership.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a gentleman from Oklahoma who has been a longtime leader in religious freedom and religious liberty issues. It is my privilege to yield the floor to him now, Mr. JAMES LANKFORD.

Mr. LANKFORD. It is my pleasure to be here. Thank you.

The National Prayer Breakfast coming up this week is a great reminder to us as a Nation just to be able to slow down, not as Republicans and Democrats, but as Americans, to be able to come together and do what we always do: to pray. It's what we've done from the very beginning. We are a people of prayer.

I enjoy getting a chance to tell people at home in Oklahoma about how Members of Congress get together to be able to pray in the Prayer Caucus time. We gather privately just to be able to sit down and pray. The House and the Senate both open every day in prayer.

Sitting on the platform of the inauguration just a few weeks ago, President Obama asked two different individuals to pray during that ceremony time. It should put to rest forever the debate whether we have prayer in public places when you see it in the House, in the Senate, in the executive branch, prayers repeated over and over again, and have from the very beginning.

We have our national optimism because we believe that this world and this Nation, they were created with a purpose, and that the Creator cares for His creation. From our founding documents, we believe that all people are created equal and are given certain rights from God, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We're different as America because we believe that our rights come from God, not from men, and our core values come from something greater than ourselves.

For many Americans, prayer is just a normal part of their day. It's like breathing in and out for them. As they go through the course of the day, they pray. That's no different for our many elected leaders, as well. We don't walk away from God because we're elected. We challenge our fellow Americans to do the same. We need His wisdom. We need His love. And it is in the moment when we are most arrogant and think that we meet our own needs that we forget to pray. But it's in the moment when we are needy as a Nation, as we are right now, we remember to pray.

At 8 years old, I remember extremely well sitting in church up in the balcony of our big church and realizing for the first time in my life there is a God and I don't know him. I spent the rest of that day thinking and processing through what it means to know God. As an 8-year-old boy, I laid in bed that night and I prayed to Jesus for the first time in my life that I would be forgiven of my sin, and I began a relationship with this God who made me. It was my first prayer, but it's definitely not been my last.

As a Nation, we understand how it begins, as well. If you walk out in the rotunda here in the Capitol, you'll see a huge painting hanging in the rotunda that's called the "Embarkation of the Pilgrims." It was a painting done and hung in the rotunda in 1843, and it's supposed to depict the beginning of America. You know what the painting is of? The painting is of a group of Pilgrims gathered on the deck of a ship praying. It is the painting that is the beginning of America.

Last week at a town hall meeting in Konawa, Oklahoma, as they're gathered around to deal with a very difficult water issue in their town, do you know how they started their city council meeting? With a prayer. It's quite

frankly the same way that I ended my day last night before I headed to Washington, D.C., kneeling beside my daughter's bed to pray. It's what we do as Americans. It's quite frankly when we're at our best. And it's a good thing for us as a Nation to slow down and remember, it's good to pray.

God bless our Nation this week as we do exactly that as a nation in this National Day of Prayer: to pray.

Mr. FORBES. I would like to thank Congressman LANKFORD for his words and for his strong work throughout the year on these issues.

Now it is now my privilege to yield to another individual that's been a passionate leader on religious freedom and religious liberty, Congressman LOUIE GOHMERT from Texas.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Virginia for having this time tonight. There's no better occasion than the National Prayer Breakfast.

My dear friend from Virginia leads each week when we're in session the first night of the week with bipartisan prayer. There is so much disagreement on this floor. I know my good friend from Texas, AL GREEN, and I have disagreement on issues, but he is my Christian brother and we prayed together tonight. It's a great honor to do that.

There's so much misinformation out there about the starting of this country, and there are always plenty of mistakes made. When you look back to the very beginning, after the rocky start with the Articles of Confederation, 4 years later they talked Washington into coming back and coming to Philadelphia and presiding over a convention. He was very reluctant to do that. He thought he had done his part. But after 4 or 5 weeks of nothing but rancor and a lot of yelling, very difficult times within Independence Hall, finally 80-year-old Benjamin Franklin stood up and was recognized by the president of the Constitutional Convention, George Washington.

Franklin had enjoyed life a great deal, but at that point he was overweight, had arthritis, gout. He was in a lot of trouble, but his mind was quite sharp. He was 2 to 3 years away from meeting his Maker. But he pointed out, we've been going for nearly 4 or 5 weeks, and we have more noses than ayes on virtually every vote. Then he says these words.

Now Madison entered notes to what he said, but Franklin wrote out his whole speech, and that is part of our archives. He said in his own words:

How has it happened, Sir, that we have not once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understanding?

In the beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room. Our prayers, Sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered.

And he goes on to point out that all of them should be able to remember specific prayers that they had prayed

that were answered. Then he said these words, his words, his handwriting we have, as he spoke to the convention:

I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings, that unless the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it.

He urged his colleagues to believe it as he did, and he made a motion that they begin each session with prayer, as they had during the Constitutional Convention. Mr. SHERMAN seconded it. There was a lot of debate. I heard someone call in to Sean Hannity's show a few months ago, and they were saying, Well, gee, prayer meant nothing in the early days. In essence it was his point that that motion was defeated.

□ 1950

If you go back and look at the history, during the Constitutional Convention, they had money and they hired a chaplain. They agreed on the chaplain, and the chaplain led the prayer. During the Constitutional Convention, as was pointed out after Franklin's motion, they didn't have any money to hire a chaplain. They had no money. So they ended up not passing it because they didn't have money to hire a chaplain; and if they didn't hire a chaplain, they didn't see how they could agree on who would do the prayer.

They ultimately went together to hear a sermon on the anniversary of our independence. They prayed together; they worshiped together; and they came back. Ultimately, the result was our Constitution. When the Congress began to meet, they did have money; they did hire a chaplain; and they did start each session with prayer.

It was interesting when, back a few years ago, we were called into session on a Sunday to vote on the President's health care bill. Well, it was the first time I'd been called into session on a Sunday, and I greatly appreciated my friend from Virginia's leadership. We had a discussion: if we're going to be forced to come to Congress, called into session on a Sunday—what many of us call the Lord's day—then it doesn't seem like there should be a problem reviving a tradition that spanned most of the 1800s, and that was to have church right down the hall here—in Statuary Hall as it's called now—but in what was the House of Representatives for most of the 1800s, until around 1858, when they moved into this Chamber, although it did not look like this. During those years, they had church service every Sunday. It was the largest Christian church service—non-denominational—in Washington, D.C.

Now, those who know the Constitution know there is no mention of the words "separation of church and State," "wall of separation." That was in a letter that Thomas Jefferson

wrote to the Danbury Baptists. It had nothing to do with whether or not there should be discrimination against a Christian church as we often see now by the government. It seems that Christians are the only group that is politically expedient to be prejudiced against anymore—too often. The man who used the words “separation of church and State,” Thomas Jefferson, we had verified by the research that the Congressional Research Service did.

When I just glanced at the report they provided, I saw that Madison didn't do this, and I thought, gee, that's weird. I thought Jefferson and Madison as President both went to church in the House of Representatives down the hall, so I looked more intently at the report. It said that Thomas Jefferson did go to church, and, in fact, Jefferson would often bring the Marine Band to play the hymns for the church service down the hall. That's a little different definition of the “separation of church and State” that's often given now. Just down the hall, they had open prayer and they had open worship, and nothing about any of that offended their sense of the First Amendment.

It turns out what the report said was Jefferson would normally ride to church each Sunday that he was President up to Capitol Hill on horse, on horseback. It pointed out that Madison didn't do this. Madison normally came to church every Sunday here in the House of Representatives in a horse-drawn carriage—he didn't ride a horse; he rode in a carriage—but the man who is given the most credit for the most work of our Constitution, James Madison, was not at all offended, and he didn't think the Constitution was offended by having church down the hall.

So I'll always be grateful to my friend from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) for suggesting let's have church, and we came together. They set it up, and it just reminded us of what it must have been like except they wouldn't have had steel and plastic chairs, but we had a worship service. What was particularly great, I thought, was that the prayers, both from Democrats and Republicans, were historic prayers that had been prayed in this Capitol many, many years ago as part of our history. It was a historical service, but there it was in the same place that the voice of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison would have echoed in song and in verse and in prayer. Such a rich history we have.

I'm sure my friend from Virginia has heard people call and write nasty notes, saying, Keep your religion at home. This is when I have read historical prayers, historical proclamations by George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and all in between—Adams, John Quincy Adams—by all of these historical heavyweights in our past. People write, Keep that stuff out of government, not realizing, because of their lack of proper education, that those

were part of our history. They were part of what made this country the greatest country in the world. It was part of what inspired John Quincy Adams, who Abraham Lincoln credited as having such an impact on him for that brief year they overlapped in the House of Representatives, to ultimately come back and become President—to end that blot, that blight, on this country's history called “slavery.”

Of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose statue is just down the hall in the Rotunda, the man was an ordained Christian minister. He spent his life, I've heard some say, in order to have all races created equal, and I would go one further as a young Christian white boy: he freed young Christian white boys to treat Christian brothers and sisters like Christian brothers and sisters. He did a great service for all of America.

So I thank my friend from Virginia for hosting this time to talk about the historical importance of prayer. I look forward to this Thursday's prayer breakfast. It's an honor to be the Republican co-chair on the House side, and I look forward to the breakfast on Thursday.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you and all within the sound of the voice of the Members of Congress will be there with us this Thursday morning.

Mr. FORBES. I thank the gentleman for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of humility that we always take the floor in this Chamber. Tonight especially, as I look over your head, I see the inscription of our national motto: “In God We Trust.” Most of the individuals watching from home don't get to see that because the cameras are fixed below it, so they normally don't show it.

You have heard remarks tonight from Republicans and Democrats, and one of the truly great privileges of serving in this body is that we get to serve with some wonderful people. They come from a lot of wonderful States, and each of those States has its own history. We're not only proud of that history, but we learn so much from that history. I come from Virginia. When we look at our history, even before the first colonists ever stepped foot on the shores in Virginia, it was drafted in the charter of Virginia that one of the major purposes of that colony was going to be to propagate faith and to propagate religion.

As they made that arduous journey across an ocean and didn't know if they were going to live or die, they had a ragtag group of people, and they weren't exactly the people that you'd have teaching Sunday school classes. They were tough individuals. When they landed on the shores, their chaplain, Robert Hunt, was able to convince them to come together and do their first organized act, which was to take an old sail and create a makeshift church, to get on their knees and thank God for delivering them over here and to ask for His wisdom and His

blessing. With all of the challenges that they had, Mr. Hunt was able to convince them to come morning and afternoon and have those same prayers. They didn't have to think a lot about what they would pray for; it was just that they could make it to the next day. They did make it to the next day and to the next year.

About 10 years later, they selected the first legislative body in the new world in 1619, and the first act of that body was to go into the church in Jamestown, to get on their knees and to ask for God's blessing and His wisdom and His guidance.

□ 2000

It doesn't surprise us then that 2 years later when they would draft the first charter of the first Constitution of Virginia, that they would have as one of its primary purposes in its dedication for the advancement and service of God and the enlargement of His kingdom. And those years turned into decades and they moved that capital from Jamestown to Williamsburg, and it was a tough several years. They would have great men of faith. Some of them would spend 13 hours a day studying the Bible, praying.

One of those individuals was a guy named Samuel Davies. He would get up oftentimes at his church and preach. One lady liked him so much that she would bring her son and daughters to hear him on a weekly basis. Her young teenage son would sit at his feet and he would learn principles that he would talk about, about God and rights that came from God and not from men. That lady was Sarah Henry, and her son was Patrick Henry.

And when Patrick was 29 years old on his birthday, the first day he was in the Virginia General Assembly, they were debating the Stamp Act. He was supposed to be there and seen and not heard. He was a freshman. He sat there and he listened, and it looked like Virginia was going to do nothing and allow the acts that had taken away so many rights just to slip right between their fingers. And as he listened and listened, he opened up a law book and there was a blank page and he started making notes. And finally he stood up and he started talking about rights that we had.

Another young man that heard Patrick Henry was a guy by the name of Thomas Jefferson. He said that Patrick Henry was the greatest orator he'd ever heard. And Patrick Henry replied, no, the greatest orator, the person he'd learned all of those concepts of freedom from, was that fellow by the name of Samuel Davies.

Years later, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Richard Henry Lee, they would find themselves in that same Virginia General Assembly, but the port of Boston was about to be closed, and the King had issued that order. They came together with a makeshift caucus and they asked themselves: What can we best do to help our fellow

colonists in Boston? Of all of the things they thought of, you know what that group came up with? They said the most important thing they could do was ask Virginians all across that Commonwealth to go down and pray for the colonists in Boston.

They spent that night writing a prayer resolution. They didn't know how to do it. They hadn't done it in years. They looked back at old puritan resolutions. They wrote one and went into the General Assembly, and they didn't know how it was going to be received. The next day, the Virginia General Assembly voted it unanimously and didn't change a word. The Governor was so irate, how dare they ask and pray against the King himself, that he stormed in with that proclamation in his hand and he dissolved the Virginia General Assembly.

Well, they were a group of individuals that didn't like the word "no," and so they walked across the street—Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, and a guy by the name of George Washington and several others, and they wrote a resolution that changed the world, a resolution that said that an attack on one colony was an attack on all of them, and they called for the first ever Congressional Continental Congress.

That Congress, as you know, would meet. And as Mr. GOHMERT pointed out, when they couldn't agree on anything else, the one thing they agreed on was opening with prayer. That Congress led to the Second Congress. In the Second Congress, they appointed a committee—Ben Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston, and Roger Sherman—to write a declaration that would birth this country. And as we are proud of in Virginia, the scrivener of that declaration was Thomas Jefferson. He would later say that he didn't write any new ideas or principles. He wrote concepts that had been heard and preached from pulpits across the Commonwealth and across this Nation, concepts that said this: Our rights didn't come from any act, any king, any committee, but they came from the Creator himself; and if they came from Him, they could never be taken away.

They went on to win that war, to win their freedom, but it didn't last long before it was challenged. And in 1812, in that war, as you know, Francis Scott Key penned that great poem that became our national anthem, the Star-Spangled Banner, and he wrote what is right behind you, and he said: Our motto will ever be "In God We Trust."

As we went into another great war that would split this country, the Civil War, this Congress declared that that motto, "In God We Trust," could be on our coins. Later, the Supreme Court would have it challenged, but in the 1890s would recount the great history of faith in this country. And almost a half century later, when the greatest battle of freedom that ever was fought

on the shores of Normandy was about to take place, Franklin Roosevelt led this entire Nation in prayer asking for blessings upon us.

After that great war and our victory, we came back in this Congress and asked where are we going to put our trust. Are we going to put it in that great atom bomb, in our resources and in our economy? This Congress said, no, our motto would be "In God We Trust," and they adopted that as our motto.

And when I was a young boy, John Kennedy, facing the Cuban missile crisis, came out and said: The guiding principle of this country has always been, is today, and will forever be, in God we trust.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that great history of faith, why is it that faith is under attack so much across this Nation? Well, Mr. Speaker, tune in, because in a few weeks we'll be back on this floor. We'll tell you who's doing it, why they're doing it, and what we need to do to stop it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

CBC HOUR: IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DAINES). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 days to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Today we are here as members of the Congressional Black Caucus to weigh in on the important issue that confronts this Nation as it relates to the need for comprehensive immigration reform. It's my honor and my privilege to represent the Eighth Congressional District anchored in Brooklyn and parts of southwest Queens, one of the most diverse districts in the country; a district that has blacks and whites, Asians, Latinos, and immigrants from every corner of the world. I recognize in the capacity of my representation in that district the significance that immigrants have given both to the communities that I represent as well as to the city of New York, the State, and the Nation.

I'm proud that we've been joined by several distinguished members of the Congressional Black Caucus which, for more than four decades, has been known as the conscience of the Congress. And in that capacity, the Congressional Black Caucus has, year after year, spent time trying to perfect our democracy and create a more perfect Union. We confront that moment right

now, here, in this great country of ours as we try and figure out how we deal with creating a pathway towards citizenship for the more than 11 million undocumented immigrants who are forced to toil in the shadows.

We've been joined today by a co-anchor for this next hour, a distinguished classmate of mine from the great State of Nevada, the gentleman STEVEN HORSFORD, who had the opportunity, I believe, last week to be present while President Barack Obama delivered his remarks as they relate to immigration reform. And so I'd like to ask Mr. HORSFORD if he might comment on the President's remarks and weigh in on the immigration debate from his perspective as a representative from the important State of Nevada.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, first I'd like to thank my classmate and colleague and say I look forward to serving with him in this historic 113th Congress as we work together to make this a more perfect Union.

I also represent one of the more diverse districts in the United States Congress. My district is 25 percent Latino, 16 percent African American, 7 percent Asian American, 2 percent Native American. It is a district that reflects both the urban as well as the rural components and communities of our great State of Nevada.

□ 2010

In fact, Congressional District 4 reflects the State of Nevada, and Nevada increasingly reflects all of America. And so I believe that is why President Obama decided, of all places that he could visit, he visited Nevada last week to discuss the fierce urgency of now in adopting a comprehensive immigration reform by this Congress; the fact that Nevada reflects the changing demographics of our country, but it also reflects the broken system which is our immigration system.

And so, as I listened to the President, and as we honor today the 100th birthday of Rosa Parks, I reflect on these issues as a basic fundamental civil right, a human right that is guaranteed to us. So today does mark the 100th birthday of Rosa Parks, an icon in the struggle for justice, a woman who was known as the mother of the civil rights movement.

As an African American woman confronting prejudice and unequal treatment under the law, Mrs. Parks remarked that what pushed her to say "no" on that fateful day in Montgomery was the simple fact that her "mistreatment was just not right," and she was "tired of it."

She said, and I quote:

I did not want to be mistreated; I did not want to be deprived of a seat that I had paid for. It was just time . . . There was opportunity for me to take a stand to express the way that I felt about being treated in that manner. I had not planned to get arrested. I had plenty to do without having to end up in jail. But when I had to face that decision, I didn't hesitate to do so because I felt that we had endured that too long. The more we gave